

VZCZCXRO5656
OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHKI #0190/01 0550840
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 240840Z FEB 08
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7581
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000190

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PHUM PREL MOPS KPKO CG

SUBJECT: CNDP "suspends" participation in Goma process after leak of MONUC report on January killings

Ref: Kinshasa 186

¶1. (SBU) Summary. CNDP announced "suspension" of its participation in the Goma peace process and of "all collaboration" with MONUC following leak of a internal MONUC/UNHRO report alleging CNDP responsibility for a January 2007 mass killing in Kalonge, North Kivu. MONUC speculates CNDP is using the report as a pretext to gain time for internal negotiations. MONUC stands behind the report, and is working with other international facilitators to get the process back on track. End Summary.

UN report blames CNDP for mass killing

¶2. (SBU) In late January, a UN field mission investigated and confirmed the mass killing of at least 21, and perhaps as many as 50, civilians January 16-17 in Kalonge, 15 km northeast of Masisi town in North Kivu. An internal report by MONUC's human rights division, which also functions as the UNHRO office in Congo, concluded that they were killed by CNDP soldiers using shotguns, machetes and hammers. The majority of the victims were men, but also included a one-year old baby, a 14-year old boy and one woman (whom investigators concluded had probably been hit by a stray bullet).

¶3. (SBU) According to the report, the area around Kalonge had been controlled by CNDP since October 2007, when its largely-Hutu residents fled to villages under the control of PARECO militia. They had returned several weeks before the massacre after the withdrawal of CNDP troops. However, CNDP forces returned, and established checkpoints outside villages near Kalonge and Lubale. The report concludes that CNDP forces arrested, beat and killed civilians over a two-day period with gunshots, machetes or hammer blows to the head. Others who tried to flee were hunted down and killed.

¶4. (SBU) The UNHRO team interviewed 20 eyewitnesses, but were unable to visit neighboring villages to talk to others because of the security situation. Interviews suggested that the killings "were planned and that civilians were targeted." One witness said that soldiers told her husband, "You are PARECO, you live with PARECO. We are the CNDP and we are going to kill you."

MONUC scrambles, and the CNDP reacts

¶5. (SBU) The report was leaked by an unknown source, presumably within MONUC, and press reports began appearing February 19. A prepared statement read by MONUC spokesman Kemal Saiki at MONUC's

weekly press conference the next day in Kinshasa included reference to the Kalonge incident under the heading "MONUC reaction to the human rights situation in North Kivu." The statement laid responsibility for the incident to the "forces of dissident General Laurent Nkunda," but it was bracketed, and in fact followed, the description of an atrocity allegedly committed by the FARDC 2nd Integrated Brigade. This attempt to appear impartial was apparently lost on CNDP.

¶6. (SBU) A statement dated February 21 and signed by Nkunda was posted on the CNDP website the following day. It criticized MONUC, Saiki, and Goma Head of Office Alpha Sow, questioned MONUC's impartiality and called for an independent investigation of the Kalonge incident. It announced suspension of "all collaboration with MONUC," although not "other members of the International Facilitation." It accused MONUC of acting in bad faith and claimed MONUC "has tried everything to harm the CNDP." It also raised the earlier Kamina brassage-center incident (reftel), calling it "extremely embarrassing for MONUC" because it called into question the DDR process.

MONUC reacts

¶7. (SBU) MONUC officials speculate that CNDP is using the incidents at Kalonge and Kamina to generate time for "internal CNDP negotiations." Its press office issued a stand-alone statement February 21 which reaffirmed that MONUC stood by the report. It expressed MONUC's confidence that an independent investigation would come to the same conclusions, and promised to cooperate with any such investigation. MONUC officials will not say so publicly, but told us privately they would welcome an investigation.

KINSHASA 00000190 002 OF 002

International facilitators are working with MONUC to get the process back on track.

¶8. (SBU) Note: While CNDP was publicly lambasting MONUC, they privately asked for logistical support -- air transportation -- to move 25 political cadres from the eastern border to Kitchanga for internal consultations. End note.

Comment

¶9. (SBU) In a separate conversation February 22, Anneke van Woudenberg of Human Rights Watch, who had also reviewed the leaked report, told us it was actually in draft form and had not been through the usual editing and clearance processes. She said it is clear from the text that 20-30 people were killed: what is not is whether this was something ordered by the CNDP hierarchy (and if so at what level) or more of a settling of scores. End comment.